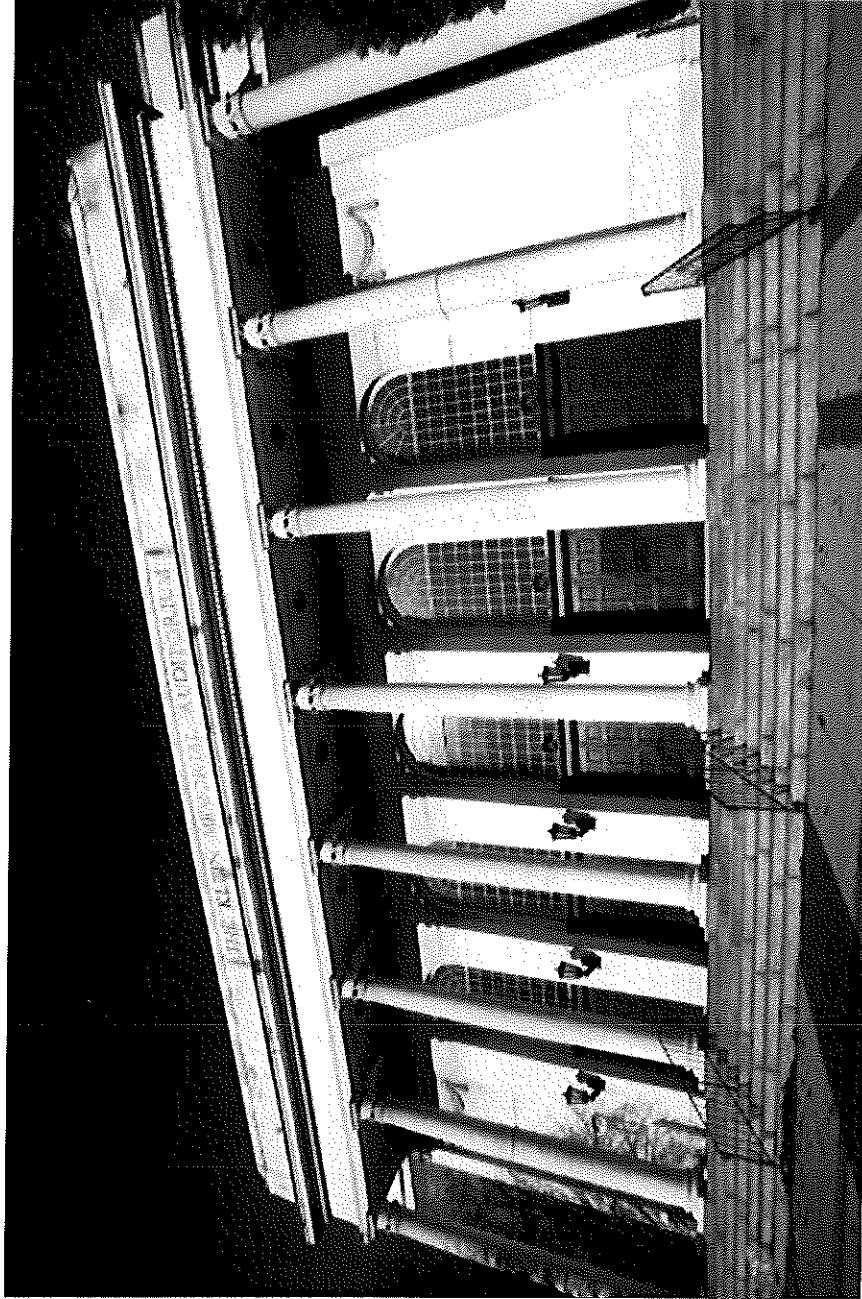


The Klein Memorial Auditorium Foundation

To Enrich, Educate and Entertain Through Arts and Ideas

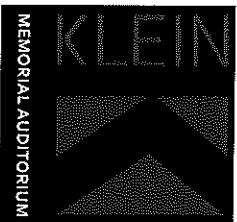


**State Bonding Proposal
March 6, 2014**

Endorsed by The City of Bridgeport and The Klein Memorial Auditorium Foundation,
Representative Santiago, Senator Ayala and the Bridgeport Legislative Delegation

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OUR BOLD VISION

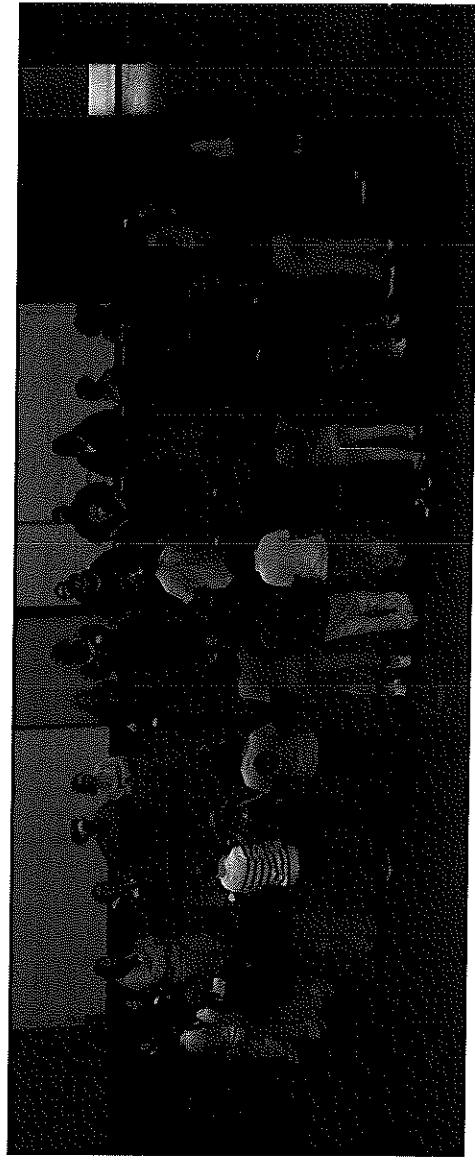
On The Cusp of our 75th Year

The Klein has the potential to be a first-rate, vibrant performing arts and culture center that will

- *improve quality of life for residents of Bridgeport and its surrounding communities,*
- *encourage economic development in the region, and*
- *provide arts education opportunities to students who need them most.*



Bridgeport high school students participate in an after school program on The Klein stage



The elegant marble lobby

The Story of The Klein

A Beautiful Legacy for Bridgeport



The Klein Memorial Auditorium was the vision of Jacob Klein, a lawyer and active supporter of Bridgeport community organizations. Upon his death in 1932, Klein left a large portion of his estate to build a memorial auditorium for the purpose of the “improvement and entertainment of the People of Bridgeport.”

‘Mature Grandeur’

Designed by Leonard Asheim, a local architect responsible for many circa 1910 to 1940 religious and municipal buildings in Bridgeport, the auditorium was built in the era’s Art Deco style. Its unique decorative details included magnificent bronze doors, a marble lobby, inlaid wood and geometric motifs. Klein also left funds in trust for the building’s care and specified that the auditorium would be managed by the Board of Directors of the Bridgeport Public Library.

Our benefactor, Jacob Klein

Rich and Diverse Programming

The Klein's inaugural performance in 1940 was by Spanish dancer Manuela Del Rio and her ensemble. Decades of rich and diverse offerings followed, including performances by such artists as pianist Egon Petri, Orson Welles, Isaac Stern, humorist Molly Picon, The Metropolitan Opera, Gloria Swanson, and Francis Lederer. The Klein's heyday period of the '40s saw appearances by Yiddish comedian Leo Fuchs, the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, and civil rights leaders Paul Robeson and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

More recently, through a partnership with Fairfield Theatre Company, Alice Cooper, B.B. King, Disco Biscuits, Dweezil Zappa, Herbie Hancock, George Carlin, Peter Frampton, Boyz II Men and the B-52's have appeared on The Klein stage.

In addition to its history as a first-rate concert venue, The Klein has proudly hosted and supported local arts and community organizations. Local dance recitals, graduations, and union meetings occur regularly at The Klein, and the theater has been the home of the Greater Bridgeport Symphony Orchestra for the past 60 years.



The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King onstage at
The Klein, ca. 1961
courtesy of the Bridgeport History Center

The Klein Today

Fulfilling the Vision of Jacob Klein

The Klein Foundation

In 1997, The Klein Foundation was established as a 501c3 organization to provide a more effective vehicle for raising funds to meet the increasing financial demands of the organization. In 2004, management responsibilities and the income from the Trust were legally transferred to the Foundation.

The Klein has operated generally as a rental space for much of its history, though the Library Board presented and produced shows out of The Klein during the early years when the cost and effort of doing this was much lighter. More recently, the Fairfield Theater Company assumed management of The Klein, an arrangement that worked well to maintain a basic level of performances: the FTC presented well-known rock performers and did the marketing and ran the box office for all of The Klein's shows.

In 2011, The Klein Foundation's Board decided to hire a full-time Director and then a Director of Development to improve The Klein's operations, increase its performance-generated revenues, and strengthen its funding base.

The people of Bridgeport have always been at the center of The Klein Memorial Auditorium's mission to "Enrich, Educate and Entertain through Arts and Ideas," a statement that is both the fulfillment of Jacob Klein's vision and the basis for all Klein programming over the course of nearly 75 years.

After School at The Klein (ASK)

ASK is a new, tuition-free youth initiative offered by The Klein in partnership with the Bridgeport Board of Education, New Paradigm Theater, and Kids Empowered by Your Support (KEYS) four days each week. ASK values artistic expression and its potential to develop individuals and their communities and is open to Bridgeport students in grades 8-12. The program features instruction in many arts, from acting and dance to video production, puppetry and 3-D design.

A top-notch professional staff composed of Broadway performers, television and film producers, puppetry and performance artists, as well as experienced local arts educators, provide their expertise to Bridgeport students and their families in the inspiring Klein Memorial Auditorium. Students have frequent opportunities to perform, explore new perspectives, and challenge themselves creatively. ASK fosters a vibrant, supportive creative environment through daily positive interaction between talented students and caring adults.

ASK students work together to learn, rehearse, and ultimately mount performances onstage at The Klein. In addition to honing their performing arts skills, ASK students also reap the proven cognitive and social benefits of arts learning – problem solving, focus, collaboration and persistence.

KEYS at The Klein (K@K) is a Saturday component of ASK that provides tuition-free private instrument instruction to Bridgeport students. KEYS prepares students for eventual participation in the Greater Bridgeport Youth Orchestras, a long-time Klein partner.

ASK is the cornerstone of The Klein's education and outreach efforts. With your help, ASK will grow with The Klein, gaining community support and serving more students annually.

The Need For Physical Capacity at The Klein

Making The Case

Modernization - An Ongoing Effort

The Klein would like to thank the General Assembly for its help in 1994 with funding that began the process of making the Klein sustainable. The bulk of the work done at that time was to demolish a vacant car dealership building across the street from the theatre to create adequate parking for Klein patrons. Repairs were also made to the HVAC system and to the seats in the auditorium. These improvements were crucial and jump-started the process of revitalizing The Klein and its neighborhood. We are now at a similar critical juncture, and we must continue these improvement efforts to ensure The Klein's sustainability.

Bridgeport, the most populous city in Connecticut, has not yet been able to reap the benefits that other cities have from their performing arts centers – increased tourism, boosts in retail and restaurant business, and improved quality of life for citizens. The Klein would cost over \$100 million to build from scratch today, and is poised to bolster arts education locally and stimulate economic activity in Bridgeport and its surrounding communities. The key is to invest in further physical improvements that will enable The Klein to fulfill its potential as a cultural asset.

Limited Office & Classroom Space

Though the Auditorium itself is expansive, auxiliary space in The Klein building is extremely limited. The building lacks sufficient office space to accommodate the operations necessary to run a modern performing arts center. Space for employee workstations and conference rooms are desperately needed, as are classrooms to support The Klein's growing education programs. Also of vital importance is the addition of reception space to the front of the building. Currently, because of the building's layout, The Klein's exterior doors remain locked whenever there is no production in progress. This hampers deliveries, reception, and other routine office procedures, and greatly impedes The Klein's connection to the community.

ADA & Safety Deficiencies

As The Klein predates the Americans with Disabilities Act, there are no elevators in the building. This prevents people with physical disabilities from accessing the mezzanine and balcony, and limits stage access for disabled performers, students and employees. Wheelchair access is limited to a rear door and there is only one small restroom that is handicapped accessible. There is also a need for balcony handrails and other safety fixtures that would make the building safe and accessible to senior citizens and disabled persons.

Out-Dated Technical Capabilities

Though The Klein was built to standards that rivaled New York's classic Broadway theatres, its technical equipment has not been sufficiently upgraded to keep pace with the ever-advancing fields of theatrical lighting and sound. The lack of modern sound, lighting and stage equipment prevents The Klein from attracting first-rate entertainment. Our technical theater education program is also hampered by these limitations. The program employs members of the local stagehand's union to teach stagecraft to Bridgeport teens. Upgrading to state-of-the-art equipment would improve student learning and better prepare them for professional work in the field, should they choose to pursue it.

Economic Impacts

Transforming The Klein Into An Educational & Cultural Nexus

Project Costs

The Klein Memorial Auditorium Foundation has grown rapidly over the past three years by hiring staff, adding community programs, and growing its rental portfolio. KMAF has reached its programming capacity in its current structure. The improvements outlined below will allow The Klein to continue delivering its current services more effectively and efficiently.

1. Addition of two elevators with support structures, fire code-compliant stairwell and egress. \$1.5m
As The Klein building predates the Americans with Disabilities Act, there are no elevators in the building. This prevents people with physical disabilities from sitting in the mezzanine and balcony, and limits stage access for disabled performers, students and employees.
2. Construction of new office, classroom and meeting space. \$2.5m
Though the Auditorium itself is expansive, auxiliary space in The Klein building is extremely limited. The building lacks sufficient office space to accommodate the operations necessary to run a modern performing arts center. Space for employee workstations and conference rooms are desperately needed, as are classrooms to support The Klein's growing education programs. Also of vital importance is the addition of reception space to the front of the building. Currently, because of the building's layout, The Klein's exterior doors remain locked whenever there is no production in progress. This hampers deliveries, reception, and other routine office procedures, and greatly impedes The Klein's connection to the community.
3. Modernization of sound, lighting and stage equipment. \$900,000
The Klein was built to standards that rivaled New York's classic Broadway theatres. However, its technical equipment has not been sufficiently upgraded to keep pace with the ever-advancing fields of theatrical lighting and sound. The lack of modern sound, lighting and stage equipment prevents The Klein from attracting first-rate entertainment. Our technical theater education program is also hampered by these limitations. The program employs members of the local stagehand's union to teach stagecraft to Bridgeport teens. Upgrading to state-of-the-art lighting, sound and stage equipment would improve student learning and better prepare them for professional work in the field.
4. New carpets, handrails and other safety fixtures and small repairs. \$100,000
The carpeting throughout The Klein is over 20 years old, and it has become a safety hazard as portions of it are coming unglued. There are also no handrails in the rather steep balcony, which makes navigating the area difficult and dangerous for elderly patrons, children, or anyone unsteady on their feet.

Job Creation & Other Positive Impacts

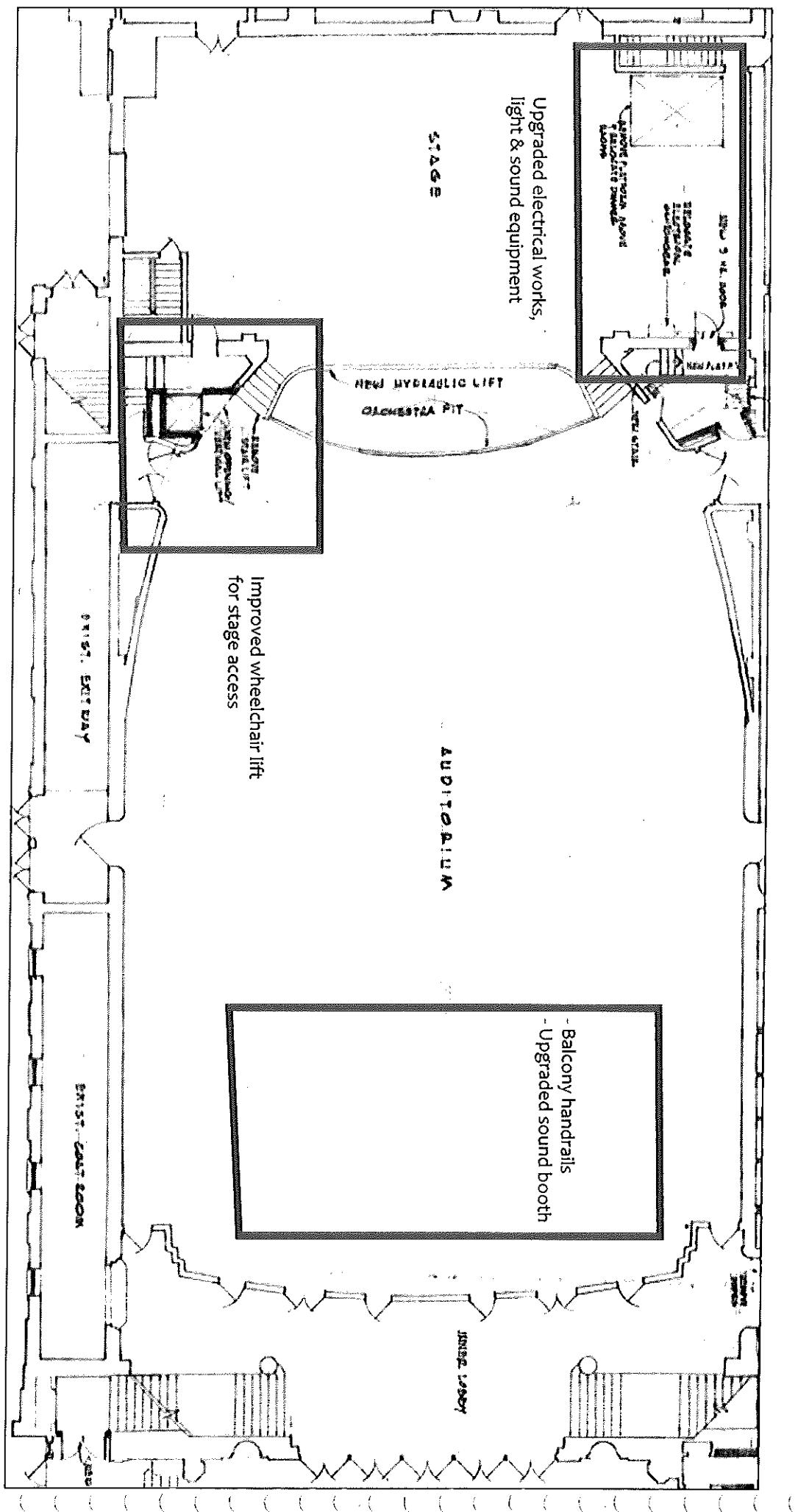
Modernizing The Klein will exponentially increase its potential to contribute to local and regional economies through job creation. Currently, KMAF has 2 full-time employees and 3 part-time employees. Other performing arts centers of The Klein's size employ between 12 and 50 full-time employees to manage administration, development & fundraising, marketing & PR, artistic output, box office operations, IT support, patron services, and community outreach. The current proposal will provide the funds needed to construct and equip office space to support 10 full-time staff. In addition, the construction project will create between 30 and 60 temporary trade jobs in the short term.

ASK is an excellent example of how increased activity at The Klein can lead to greater economic investment in Bridgeport and the region. ASK employs 15 part-time staff, all of whom are professional artists, from throughout Fairfield and New Haven counties. Many of them had never heard of The Klein and had no reason to visit Bridgeport. Now, they are taking public transit to the city and patronizing local businesses. Over time, increased activity - supported by appropriate physical infrastructure - will lead to increased demand for amenities in The Klein neighborhood, which in turn will also boost the local economy.

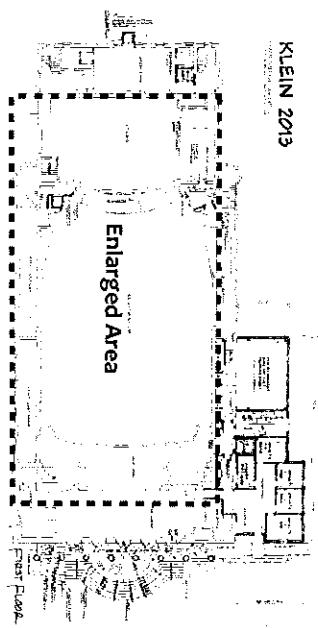
ASK has also created a unique opportunity for job creation and retention in Bridgeport. As mentioned above, ASK employs members of the International Association of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) to teach stagecraft to students. This arrangement is mutually beneficial because IATSE has the opportunity to expand their ranks by getting more young people interested in the trade, while The Klein gains competent student technicians who can eventually be employed for Klein events.

PROPOSED RENOVATION

Figure 1 - Aerial View



KLEIN 2013

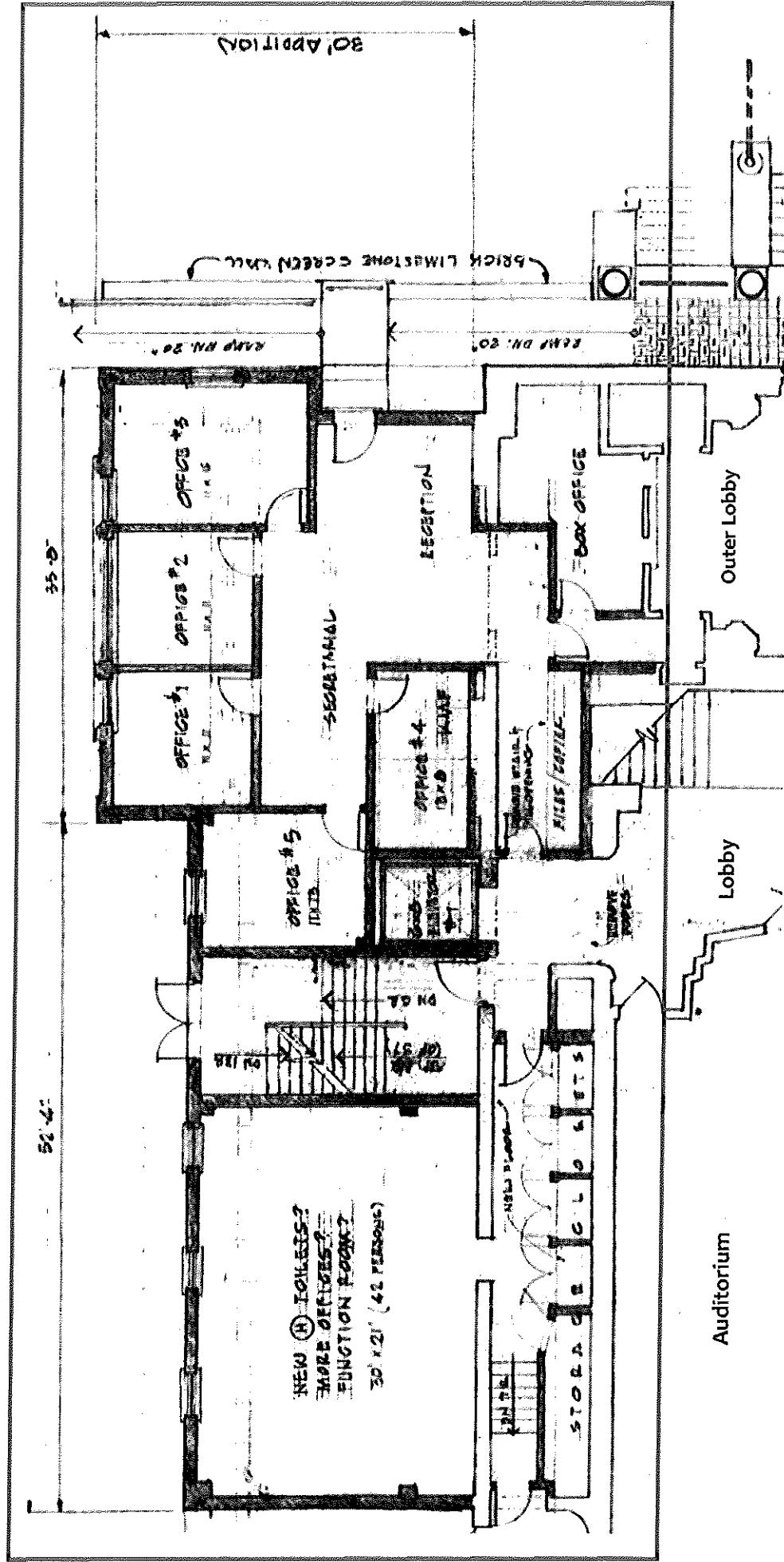


PROPOSED RENOVATION

Figure 2 - Office Addition



Aerial View



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